



# RIDING HOOD ROTEN!



The Story of  
**LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD**

by Trisha Speed Shaskan

as Told by  
**THE WOLF**

illustrated by Gerald Guerlais



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Honestly,  
**RED RIDING HOOD**  
WAS **ROTTEN!**

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Summary: The Big Bad Wolf, who claims to be a vegetarian, tells his side of the story of Little Red Riding Hood and her granny.

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**Chomp! Chomp!** Oh, I'm sorry. I was just finishing my lunch. My name's Wolf—Big Bad Wolf. You may have heard the story of Little Red Riding Hood. About a girl and her granny? Seems everyone has. My tail is different. Did I say tail? I meant tale.



Once upon a time, I ran out of food. Completely. The cupboards were bare. The freezer too. And I'd eaten every last vegetable and fruit in the garden. **Every one.**

Other wolves might've lunched on little forest critters: chipmunks, bunnies, squirrels. But I'm a vegetarian. That's right; I don't eat meat. Well, I try not to. I **LOVE** apples. Honeycrisp, Pink Lady, Golden Delicious ... Any kind, really. But, sadly, it was a long time until apple harvest.

I hadn't eaten in weeks. My stomach growled and howled. It moaned and groaned. It even roared. Then, my nose took over.

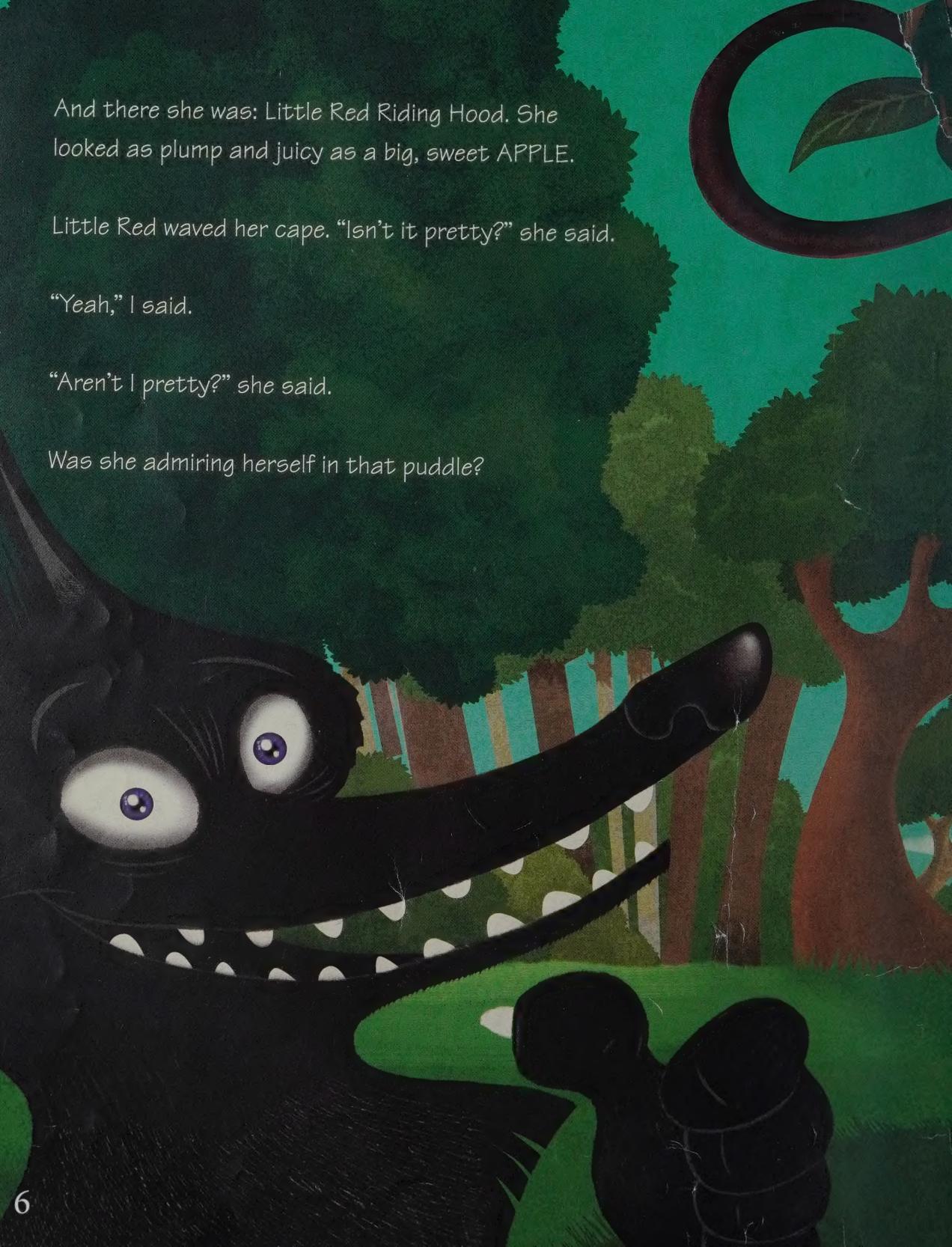
**Sniff. Sniff.** I took a whiff. What was it?

A girl.

**Sniff. Sniff.** I took a whiff. What was it?

Cake. Butter. In *this* forest? I had to investigate.





And there she was: Little Red Riding Hood. She looked as plump and juicy as a big, sweet APPLE.

Little Red waved her cape. "Isn't it pretty?" she said.

"Yeah," I said.

"Aren't I pretty?" she said.

Was she admiring herself in that puddle?

“With this cape,” she said, “I’m even prettier than usual.”

Boy, someone sure was full of herself.  
My stomach growled.



Little Red twirled a strand of hair. "Mother says the cape looks grand with my skin. My skin shines like pearls."

Or the meat of a ripe apple, I thought, licking my chops.

Remember, I hadn't eaten in weeks.

***Time to chomp!***





But then Little Red said, "I can't wait until Granny sees how pretty I am today. I'm bringing her cake and butter from my mother."

My stomach howled. TWO meals, I thought: Granny for breakfast, Little Red for lunch (and cake and butter for dessert).

"Where does Granny live?" I asked.

Little Red pointed. "Down there, in the clearing. The brown house."

I knew that house. And I had a plan.



A large, dark illustration of a cat's head and upper body dominates the right side of the page. The cat has long, dark, spiky hair-like tufts on its ears. Its eyes are large, white, and almond-shaped with blue pupils. It has a wide, toothy grin showing many sharp, white fangs. The background behind the cat is a bright teal color.

"Let's play a game," I said.

Little Red smiled. "I'm awesome at games."

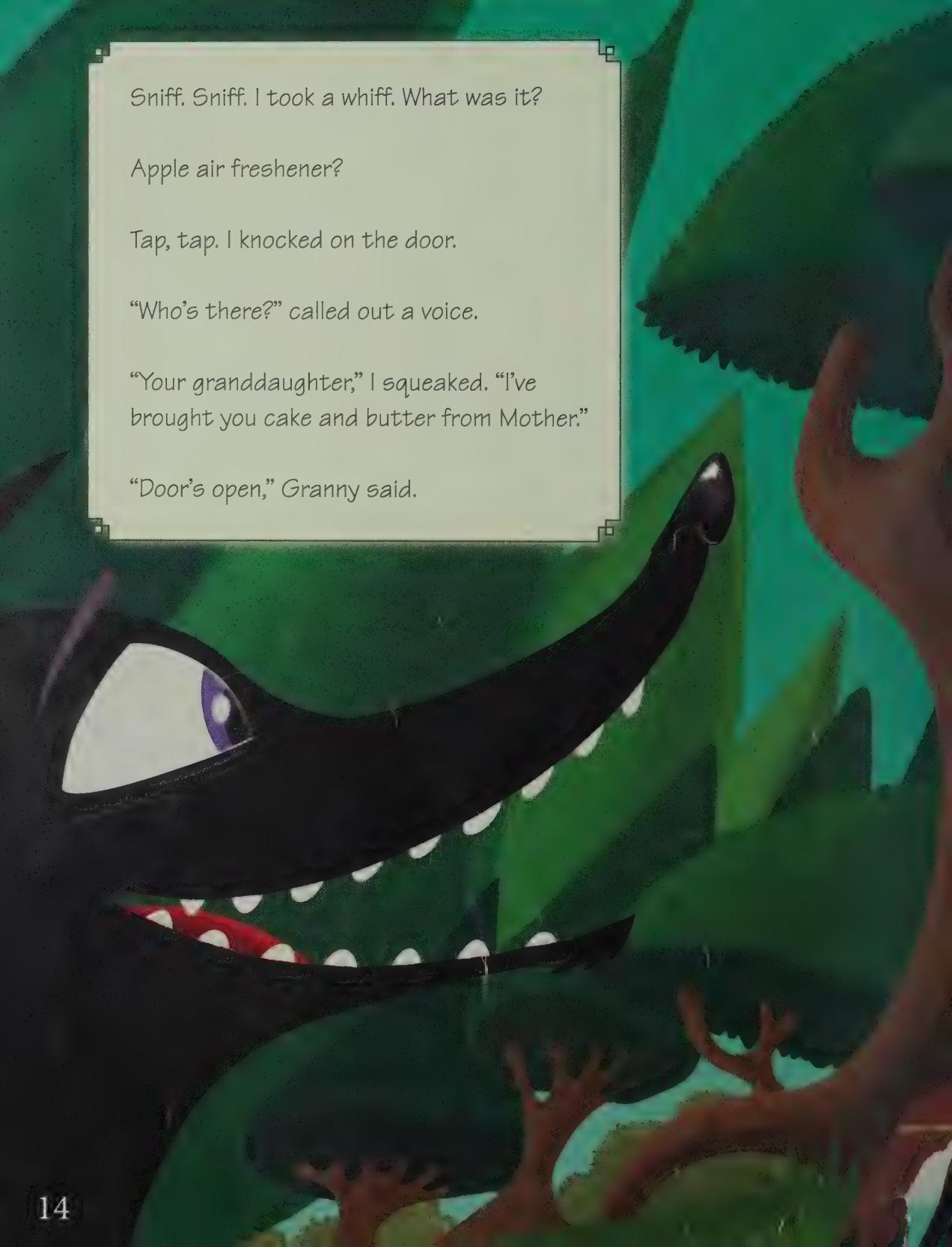
"I bet you are," I said. "You take this path. I'll take that path. And let's see who arrives at Granny's first."

"I will," she said. "I'm the prettiest and the fastest."

"I bet you are," I said.

A dark, atmospheric illustration of a forest. In the center, a large tree trunk stands with two wooden signs attached to its lower half. The top sign reads "THIS PATH" and the bottom sign reads "THAT PATH". A black cat with large, wide eyes is perched on the left side of the tree, looking towards the right. On the right side of the tree, a figure wearing a large red hooded cloak is walking away from the viewer. The background is filled with dark green foliage and branches.

My stomach moaned. Before it groaned, I ran.  
No one knows the forest like I do. I chose the  
shorter path.



Sniff. Sniff. I took a whiff. What was it?

Apple air freshener?

Tap, tap. I knocked on the door.

"Who's there?" called out a voice.

"Your granddaughter," I squeaked. "I've brought you cake and butter from Mother."

"Door's open," Granny said.



Granny tugged at her nightcap. "Green," she said. "Isn't it pretty?"

Pretty like a Granny Smith apple, I thought.

"Aren't I pretty?" Granny said.

You must've heard the saying "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree"? Well, it's true.





My stomach roared.

"What's that noise?" Granny asked.

***Chomp! Chomp!***

I had to eat her. She was no  
McIntosh apple, but not too bad.

I still felt hungry.

Tap, tap. Little Red knocked on the door.

"Who's there?" I called out, crawling into Granny's bed.

"Your granddaughter," Little Red said. "I've brought you cake and butter from Mother."

"Door's open," I said.

Little Red walked in and caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror. "Isn't my cape pretty, Granny?" she said.  
"Aren't I pretty?"

I clenched my teeth.







"**G**ranny," Little Red said,  
"what deep dark eyes I have."

"**M**mmhmm," I said,  
"the color of apple seeds."



"**G**ranny," she said,  
"what perfect ears I have."



"**M**mmhmm," I said,  
"shaped like sharply cut apple slices."



"Granny," she said,  
"what pretty red lips I have."

"Mmmhmm," I said, "Red Delicious."



"Granny," she said,  
"what lovely skin I have."



# *Chomp! Chomp!*

I ate her up. What can I say? Things look different when you're hungry. She was no Fuji or Crispin apple (in fact, to be honest, she was a bit rotten), but she was better than nothing.

Plus, I got dessert.



## Think About It

Read a classic version of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Now look at the Big Bad Wolf's version of the story. List some things that happened in the classic version that didn't happen in Wolf's version. Then list some things that happened in Wolf's version that didn't happen in the classic. How are the two versions different?

If it had been apple season, do you think Wolf would've eaten Little Red and her grandma? Why or why not?

The classic version of *Little Red Riding Hood* is told from an invisible narrator's point of view. But Wolf's story is from his point of view. Which point of view do you think is more truthful?

How would other fairy tales change if they were told from another point of view? For example, how would Cinderella's story change if one of her stepsisters told it? What if the baby bear in *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* told that story? Write your own version of a classic fairy tale from a new point of view.



## Glossary

- character**—a person, animal, or creature in a story
- narrator**—a person who tells a story
- point of view**—a way of looking at something
- version**—an account of something from a certain point of view

## Read More

Daly, Niki. *Pretty Salma: A Little Red Riding Hood Story from Africa*. New York: Clarion, 2007.

Forward, Toby. *The Wolf's Story: What Really Happened to Little Red Riding Hood*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick, 2005.

Pinkney, Jerry. *Little Red Riding Hood*. New York: Little, Brown, 2007.

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Honestly,

# RED RIDING HOOD WAS ROTTEN!

OF COURSE YOU THINK I DID A HORRIBLE THING BY EATING  
LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD AND HER GRANNY. YOU DON'T KNOW  
THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY. WELL, LET ME TELL YOU ...

The Story of  
**LITTLE RED  
RIDING HOOD**

as Told by  
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